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Viewing cable 09BOGOTA3093, COLOMBIA-ECUADOR TIES THAWING

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Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#09BOGOTA3093**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09BOGOTA3093	2009-09-29 15:02	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN	Embassy Bogota

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.eluniverso.com/2011/04/09/1/1355/cable-227458.html>

VZCZCXYZ0000
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBO #3093/01 2721502
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 291502Z SEP 09
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0140
INFO RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RHMFISS/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/FBI WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 0042
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 0007
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 0041
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ SEP LIMA 0048
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA 0045

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 003093

NOFORN
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2019/09/29
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [KJUS](#) [PTER](#) [ETRD](#) [OAS](#) [CO](#) [EC](#)
SUBJECT: COLOMBIA-ECUADOR TIES THAWING

REF: BOGOTA 3011

CLASSIFIED BY: Mark Wells, Political Counse...

id: 227458
date: 9/29/2009 15:02
refid: 09BOGOTA3093
origin: Embassy Bogota
classification: CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN
destination: 09BOGOTA3011
header:
VZCZCXYZ0000
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBO #3093/01 2721502
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 291502Z SEP 09
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0140
INFO RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RHMFISS/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/FBI WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 0042
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 0007
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 0041
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ SEP LIMA 0048
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA 0045

----- header ends -----

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 003093

NOFORN
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2019/09/29
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [KJUS](#) [PTER](#) [ETRD](#) [OAS](#) [CO](#) [EC](#)
SUBJECT: COLOMBIA-ECUADOR TIES THAWING

REF: BOGOTA 3011

CLASSIFIED BY: Mark Wells, Political Counselor; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

SUMMARY

¶1. (C/NF) Colombia and Ecuador announced on September 24 that they had begun the process of re-establishing diplomatic relations, which Ecuador severed in March 2008 after a Colombian military raid against a Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) camp in Ecuadorian territory. The two sides released an 11-point outline of the terms of the process, beginning with the naming of Charges d'Affaires in October. The communique also included a Colombian pledge to refrain from military action inside Ecuador, an Ecuadorian promise to crack down on illegal armed groups in its territory, bilateral efforts to improve the situation of Colombian refugees in Ecuador, and initiatives to increase communication and coordination between authorities on both sides of the border. The agreement deferred particularly thorny topics or set them up for mediation through the Carter Center or Organization of American States (OAS). Colombian officials credit Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa's constructive attitude in recent Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) meetings, likely motivated by the need to diplomatically address a range of bilateral issues. Colombia appears to be looking at the thaw as a way to drive a wedge between Ecuador and Venezuela and improve commerce with Ecuador as trade with Venezuela worsens, but it will take time for Colombia and Ecuador to overcome remaining differences. End Summary.

RAPPROCHEMENT AFTER 18 MONTH BREAK

¶2. (U) Colombian Foreign Minister Jaime Bermudez and Ecuadorian Foreign Minister Fander Falconi announced on September 24 that their countries had begun the process of re-establishing diplomatic relations. (NOTE: Ecuador broke diplomatic relations with Colombia in March 2008 after a Colombian military strike against FARC Commander Raul Reyes' camp just across the border in Ecuador. End Note.) The ministers made the announcement in New York after what Colombian press characterized as four days of intense negotiations on the margins of the UN General Assembly. Bermudez also thanked the Carter Center and the OAS for their ongoing help mediating between the two sides.

11 POINT PLAN FOR WAY FORWARD

¶3. (U) The GOC and the GOE released an 11-point communique outlining the terms of the bilateral thaw. Among the most important points were that Colombia pledged to refrain from military or security operations in Ecuadorian territory, while Ecuador promised it would not tolerate the presence of illegal armed groups in its territory -- and further vowed to repel them with force, if necessary. The two governments also proposed the creation of mechanisms to improve conditions for Colombian refugees living in Ecuador, with the GOC pledging to work with NGOs and other governments to provide funds and services for them. (NOTE: The GOE estimates that about 600,000 Colombians live in its territory, 135,000 of which the UN High Commissioner for Refugees thinks need international protection as refugees. End Note.) They also announced the reactivation of the Binational Border Commission and Neighbor Committees to improve coordination and communication between the two countries' civilian, police, and military authorities.

¶4. (U) In the 11 points, Colombia and Ecuador said ongoing legal disputes between the two countries would not be part of this initial dialogue. This was a clear reference to the international arrest warrant an Ecuadorian judge issued in June for former Colombian defense minister Juan Manuel Santos in connection with the 2008 raid, and to Ecuador's legal processes against Colombia at the Hague over aerial fumigation. While the GOC explicitly noted it does not recognize extraterritorial jurisdiction for Ecuador to prosecute current or past GOC officials, the GOE said it would respect the independence of its judicial authorities. Both governments asked for further mediation from the Carter Center and the OAS on particularly sensitive topics, including security, crime control (e.g., narcotrafficking and violent crime) and economic development in the border area.

GOC SEES STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE,

GOE SEEKS PROGRESS ON ISSUES

¶5. (C/NF) Bermudez and Defense Minister Silva told us they had seen an opening with Ecuador during the recent UNASUR summit, and they hoped to drive a wedge between Ecuador and Venezuela (reftel). Ambassador Carlos Morales, MFA Acting Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, told Poloff on September 28 that Colombia hopes to reinvigorate commercial flows with Ecuador to partly offset trade woes with Venezuela.

¶6. (C) Morales opined that the GOE's change in attitude was forced by Ecuador's need to address diplomatically a range of issues, including trade, refugees, narcotics, and crime. He credited President Correa's sudden constructive attitude as chair of recent UNASUR meetings, the GOC's decision to participate at high levels in both the UNASUR Bariloche summit and Quito ministerial, Colombian President Alvaro Uribe's repeated apologies (most recently at the Bariloche summit) for the cross-border raid, and mediation by the Carter Center for the warming of relations. The ball was set in motion when two countries' foreign ministers met

quietly a few months ago at the Carter Center in Atlanta, Morales said.

WAY AHEAD NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR

17. (C/NF) Bermudez explained that both governments planned to have working groups initiate a process of direct dialogue by mid-October, with the goal of re-establishing full diplomatic relations as quickly as possible. However, Colombian Vice Minister of Defense Sergio Jaramillo told us he was not convinced the GOE was entirely committed to the process. Moreover, it is unclear whether the strategy of ignoring the Santos warrant will prevent it from coming back to derail the rapprochement. Ambassador Morales lamented Minister Silva's "unhelpful" declarations at a public event on September 27 that full diplomatic relations cannot exist if Ecuador insists on prosecuting Colombian officials and does not fulfill its promise to combat transnational criminals.

18. (C) Morales said the Colombian MFA would get to work immediately implementing the 11-point accord. At the top of the agenda are

selecting a Charge' to send to Quito, establishing bilateral working groups to discuss remaining issues, and formalizing the mechanisms for mediation through the Carter Center and OAS. The naming of Charges would provide direct diplomatic channels, replacing communication through the Argentine Embassy in Quito. While the communique was the first major positive step in re-establishing ties, Moreno opined that the number of pending issues would delay the resumption of full ties beyond this year.

COMMENT: USG SUPPORT IN PLACE

19. (C) As the verbal barrage and commercial threats from Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez continue, the GOC is eager to improve relations with neighboring Ecuador. Embassy Bogota and Embassy Quito's Northern Border Working Group carried out two days of consultations in Bogota on September 24-25 to consider a range of possible USG activities to support the 11 points (septel).

BROWNFIELD

=====CABLE ENDS=====